STATEMENT

Fund releases made to the State of Assam during the 9th Plan (1997-98-2001—2002)

(RS in lakhs)

Scheme	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
1. *Growth Centre*			
(i) Chariduar	—		150.00
(li) Matia 2. *Transport*	50.00	1250.54	100.00 1195.24
Subsidy	2548.61		

Centrally sponsored scheme for backward areas

†2446, SHRI MANOHAR KANT DHYANI: Will the MINISTER OPf. COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Centrally sponspred sehcme was implemented for the development of backward areas during the Eighth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(c) the assistance received by Himachal Pradesh and Urtar Pradesb' through this scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN) : (a) to (b) Yes Sir, with a view to promote industrialisation of backward areas in an effective manner, a Growth Centre Scheme was announced in June, 1988 by the Government of India Under which 71 Growth Centres would be developed throughout the country which would' be endowned with basis infrastructural facilities to attract industries. The' contribution of Government of India would be Rs. 10 crore per growth centrfc' (Rs. 15 crore in the case of North Eastern States) by way of equity and the remaining funds would be arranged by the State Governments. This scheme was implemented in the Eighth Five Year Plan and is ongoing in the Ninth Five Year Plan. 68 growth centres have been approved so far and Rs. 29871 crore have been released as central assistance under the scheme

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(c) The following funds have been released to the Uuar Pradesh and the Himachal Pradesh by the Central Government under the Scheme:

1. Uttar Pradesh Rs. 18.S0 crore

2. Himachal Pradesh Rs. 4.50 crore.

Agreement on Chinese Accession to WTO

2447. SHRI C. M. IBRAHIM: *Will* the Minister of COMNffiRCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and China have signed an agreement on Chinese accession to World Trade Organisation;

(b) if so, the terms of the agreement; and

(c) how far it will helpA)oost Indo-Chinese Trade and India's Trade prospects in general ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLIMARAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A bilateral agreement between India and the Peoples Republic of China was signed on 22nd February, 2000 as part of the process of China's accession to the world Trade Organisation. Under this agreement China agreed to grant India tariff concessions on a number of items of substantial trade interest to us in the Chinese market. Besides, it was also agreed to lake steps to lift some of the non-tariff harries to trade for products identified by us in the Chinese market These concessions have been granted on a non-reciprocal basis and would become effective on the accession of China to the World Trade Organisation.

(c) The agreement, involving tariff concessions and steps to remove non-tariff harries to trade, is expected to help increase bilateral trade. Enhanced bilateral co-operation and the entry of China to WTO are expected to have positive impact on world trade flows in general, which may have implications for India's trade prospects as well.

Government's silence over Indo-US Agreement for Removing QRS

2448. SHRI JIBON ROY ; Will the Minister of COMMERCE & INDUSTRY be pleased to state :—

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Chidambaram concerned over Government's silence on Indo-US